



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

**Golden Gate
National Recreation Area
Division of Planning and
Technical Services**

GGNRA
Fort Mason, Building 201
San Francisco, CA 94123

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Public Scoping Notice

Marine Mammal Center Modernization Project

The Marine Mammal Center (Center) has begun preparation of an Environmental Assessment (EA), pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), for the modernization of its facilities in the Marin Headlands, a site within the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA). Public comments on the scope of the EA are welcome until May 31, 2003. This project will be presented at the GGNRA's public meeting on May 20, 2003. The Park public meeting will be held at Building 201 Fort Mason in San Francisco and will begin at 7:00 p.m. Please note that several other projects will be presented at the Park's public meeting so the exact time of the presentation for this project is not set. For information on the agenda, please call Michael Feinstein at (415) 561-4733.

Interested individuals, organizations and agencies should send written comments to:

**Golden Gate National Recreation Area
Attn: Glenn Bixler
Building 201 Fort Mason
San Francisco, CA 94123
Phone: 415-561-4488**

BACKGROUND

The Marine Mammal Center is located in the Marin Headlands on lands managed by GGNRA. The Center rescues, rehabilitates, and releases marine mammals, some of which are threatened and endangered. The causes of marine mammal diseases are researched at the Center and new treatment protocols are developed. The Center also conducts school education programs and public education campaigns to reduce human interference in marine mammal habitat and develop an appreciation for the animals and their preservation.

PROPOSED PROJECT

The existing facilities no longer meet the operational needs of the Center. The Center is proposing to retrofit the existing facilities in order to administer better care to marine mammals and education to the public. The proposal includes the modernization of existing facilities and would be built largely within the footprint of the current facilities thus minimizing impacts to the surrounding areas. Some new construction is proposed.

Goals

- Improve treatment of marine mammals through more efficient and effective hospital facilities;
- Improve Center functionality as it relates to the marine mammals brought to the facility; and
- Improve the location of current facility features for access by staff and visiting public.

Environmental Review

The EA will be prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 and regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR 1508.9), the 2001 National Park Service (NPS) Management Policies, and the NPS Director's Order No. 12: Conservation Planning, Environmental Impact Analysis, and Decision-Making. This assessment will evaluate the potential effects of the project on the environment, including effects on natural resources, cultural resources, visitor use and experience, and socioeconomic effects. Mitigation measures will be identified to avoid or reduce any adverse environmental effects from this project. The release of a draft EA for public review is scheduled for July 2003.

Questions to consider when preparing scoping comments:

- Are there alternative approaches and ideas for accomplishing project goals?
- What issues (environmental, economic, etc.) should be considered in the environmental assessment?
- How would this project affect your use of the GGNRA?

CURRENT FACILITY

